

Truancy Policy

ABSENCES/ATTENDANCE Regular school attendance is essential for a student to make the most of his or her education—to benefit from teacher-led and school activities, to build each day’s learning on the previous day’s, and to grow as an individual. Absences from class may result in serious disruption of a student’s mastery of the instructional materials; therefore, the student and parent should make every effort to avoid unnecessary absences. Two state laws—one dealing with the required presence of school-aged children in school, e.g., compulsory attendance, the other with how a child’s attendance affects the award of a student’s final grade or course credit—are of special interest to students and parents. They are discussed below.

Compulsory Attendance State law requires that a student between the ages of six and 18 attend school, as well as any applicable accelerated instruction program, extended year program, or tutorial session, unless the student is otherwise excused from attendance or legally exempt. A student who voluntarily attends or enrolls after his or her 18th birthday is required to attend each school day until the end of the school year. If a student 18 or older has more than five unexcused absences in a semester, the district may revoke the student’s enrollment. The student’s presence on school property thereafter would be unauthorized and may be considered trespassing. [See policy FEA.] Students enrolled in prekindergarten or kindergarten are required to attend school and are subject to the compulsory attendance requirements as long as they remain enrolled. State law requires attendance in an accelerated reading instruction program when kindergarten, first grade, or second grade students are assigned to such a program. Parents will be notified in writing if their child is assigned to an accelerated reading instruction program as a result of a diagnostic reading instrument. A student will be required to attend any assigned accelerated instruction program, which may occur before or after school or during the summer, if the student does not meet the passing standards on the state assessment for his or her grade level and/or applicable subject area.

Exemptions to Compulsory Attendance State law allows exemptions to the compulsory attendance requirements for several types of absences if the student makes up all work. These include the following activities and events:

- Religious holy days; 16
- Required court appearances;
- Activities related to obtaining United States citizenship;
- Service as an election clerk;
- Documented health-care appointments for the student or a child of the student, including absences for recognized services for students diagnosed with autism spectrum disorders. A note from the health-care provider must be submitted upon the student’s arrival or return to campus; and
- For students in the conservatorship (custody) of the state,
 - o Mental health or therapy appointments; or
 - o Court-ordered family visitations or any other court-ordered activity, provided it is not practicable to schedule the student’s participation in the activity outside of school hours.

In addition, a junior or senior student’s absence of up to two days related to visiting a college or university will be considered an exemption, provided this has been authorized by the board

under policy FEA(LOCAL), the student receives approval from the campus principal, follows the campus procedures to verify such a visit, and makes up any work missed. Absences of up to two days in a school year will also be considered an exemption for a student serving as an early voting clerk, provided the district's board of trustees has authorized this in policy FEA(LOCAL), the student notifies his or her teachers, and the student receives approval from the principal prior to the absences. As listed in Section I at Accommodations for Children of Military Families, absences of up to five days will be excused for a student to visit with a parent, stepparent, or legal guardian who has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from certain deployments. Please see page 11 for that section. An absence of a student in grades 6–12 for the purpose of sounding “Taps” at a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran will also be excused by the district.

Failure to Comply with Compulsory Attendance School employees must investigate and report violations of the state compulsory attendance law. A student absent without permission from school; from any class; from required special programs, such as additional special instruction, termed “accelerated instruction” by the state; or from required tutorials will be considered in violation of the compulsory attendance law and subject to disciplinary action.

A court of law may also impose penalties against both the student and his or her parents if a school-aged student is deliberately not attending school. [A complaint against the parent may be filed in court if the student is absent without excuse from school on ten or more days or parts of days within a six month period in the same school year.](#) For a student younger than 12 years of age, the student's parent could be charged with an offense based on the student's failure to attend school. If a student age 12 through age 17 violates the compulsory attendance law, both the parent and student could be charged with an offense. [See policy FEA(LEGAL) Education Code 25.0951.]

[Campus administrators will impose the following Truancy Prevention Measures \(Texas Education Code 25.0915\):](#)

Step one: Three Unexcused Absences (UA) will result in student and parent being placed on a Behavior Improvement Plan (BIP) for Truancy. This BIP will include but not be limited to;

- Closed campus lunch at designated table
- Mandatory tutorials
- Watch and test on tutorial covering these Truancy Prevention Measures

Step two: Four and five UA will result in on-site 30-minute detentions at campus administrators' discretion

Step three: Six and seven UA will result in Saturday School Attendance with the completion of Personal Responsibility Curriculum as prescribed by site administrators.

Step Four: Eight or nine UA will result in short or long-term on-site suspension

Step Five: (a) If a student fails to attend school without excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, a school district shall within 10 school days of the student's 10th absence refer the student to a truancy court for truant conduct under Section 65.003(a)51.03(b)(2), Family Code. (b) If a student fails to attend school without

excuse as specified by Subsection (a), a school district may file a complaint against the student's parent in a county, justice, or municipal court for an offense under Section 25.093 if the school district provides evidence of the parent's criminal negligence. In this subsection, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation. In this subsection, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

TARDINESS: An unexcused tardy to class will receive disciplinary action. Repeated instances of tardiness will result in more severe disciplinary action:

- Morning Detention
- Unexcused absence toward truancy
- In School Suspension placement